

Kessler, Ellen

From: Jessica Trost [jessica_trost@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, July 23, 2009 10:43 AM
To: Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC
Subject: Hamp-Roch-Lac 345kV Project Public Scoping Comment Form
Attachments: USDA Comment Form.docx

Dear Ms. Strength,

I have taken the time to answer the questions on the public scoping comment form for the Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse 345kV Transmission Project. I have included my answers to the questions in this email and also attached a Word document containing my answers.

Thank you for considering the public comments. This is an issue that will affect many Minnesotans.

Sincerely,

Jessica Trost

Comment Form

Public Scoping Meetings:

Which meeting did you attend: Family member attended meeting in Cannon Falls, MN

Please check the following issues that are important to you for transmission line siting.

x Project Purpose and Need:

o The need for energy has decreased in MN in the last three years.

x Visual/Aesthetic resources:

o Have you seen these lines?! They're huge and they cut through beautiful landscapes.

x Proximity to residences

x Land use (agriculture, residential, recreation)

o These lines are going to go through many Minnesota farms.

x Water resources (floodplains, river crossings)

x Biological resources (wildlife habitat, raptors)

o Many trees will be cleared in the right of way of the lines!

x Historic and cultural sites

- ☒ Radio or television interference
- ☐ And GPS on farm equipment
- ☐ Noise
- ☒ Health and safety
- ☐ EMF, danger of electric shocks under the lines!
- ☒ Other: property values

What additional key issues should be addressed when assessing the potential impacts of this project?

I-224-005 | This will be a huge construction project that will destroy a lot of land in Minnesota. These lines do not seem to be a sensible solution to the growing energy need, especially since energy use has decreased in the last three years. The coal plants that are supposed to be built are an outdated form of energy production. Let's make this project more green by finding solutions that create less pollution, destroy less of our land and agricultural resources, and are closer to the area of need.

If you own property in one of the proposed corridors, please indicate all the existing uses of your property below:

- ☒ Agriculture
- ☒ Residential
- ☐ Conservation Easement
- ☐ Commercial
- ☐ Industrial
- ☐ Other:

Please describe any special uses or circumstances on your property that should be considered when assessing the Project. Please indicate the location of your property.

I-224-001 | Our farm is located in Holden Township. We produce feed and raise livestock. These lines would disrupt the agriculture in this area and could pose dangers to the livestock and farmers. Wooded areas would need to be cleared, which would disrupt hunting—another important activity for my family. Massive transmission lines would spoil the pristine beauty of this rural agricultural community.

I-224-001

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to recreational resources will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

In your opinion, what are the most sensitive resources (biological, cultural, recreational, etc.) in the Project area and why?

I-224-002

Natural and biological resources definitely need to be considered. Vast areas of forest need to be cleared for such lines creating smaller patches of woods that do not meet the habitat needs of all species. Many efforts are in place to preserve and protect the Big Woods in this area and power lines should not be an exception. I am also concerned about the effect EMF from the power lines can have on plant and animal species as well as residents in the area. Farmland is also a resource that is becoming more valuable every day. We cannot afford to compromise our excellent farmland in this area to make way for transmission lines.

In your opinion, was the project description, purpose, and need for the project adequately explained? If not, what additional information is needed?

I-224-003

NO. I had the impression that the project was being carried out when it was actually still in the approval phase. I don't fully understand the purpose of such massive lines that lose energy as they transfer it. Nor do I understand why we need such massive lines running across the entire state. I have been informed from other sources that the assessment of need didn't include the past three years, when energy use has actually decreased. I have also been informed that very little of the energy is slated for use in Minnesota. This project, according to information I had to collect with my own research efforts, will not be benefitting Minnesotans—it will just be an eyesore that destroys our landscape and resources and cause great resentment. Other (greener) options need to be considered and Minnesotans deserve to get the truth and whole story behind the lines.

I-224-004

Please tell us how to reach you.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Jessica Trost

Mailing Address: 3149 County 30 Blvd.

City: Kenyon

State: MN

Zip: 55946

I-224-002

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts to human and livestock health and safety with regard to EMF will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

I-224-003

Your comment has been noted. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will describe, in detail, project purpose and need. The justification document which has been accepted by the RUS is the Alternative Evaluation study which is available at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>.

I-224-004

Your comment has been noted. Alternatives to the project will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

I-224-005

Your comment has been noted. Potential impacts resulting from construction, operation, and maintenance of the transmission line will be addressed in resource sections throughout the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

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- ☒ Visual/Aesthetic resources:
 - Have you seen these lines?! They're huge and they cut through beautiful landscapes.
- ☒ Proximity to residences
- ☒ Land use (agriculture, residential, recreation)
 - These lines are going to go through many Minnesota farms.
- ☒ Water resources (floodplains, river crossings)
- ☒ Biological resources (wildlife habitat, raptors)
 - Many trees will be cleared in the right of way of the lines!
- ☒ Historic and cultural sites
- ☒ Radio or television interference
 - And GPS on farm equipment
- ☐ Noise
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